

Connections

May 2010

Safe & Sound Kicks Into High Gear

by Bob Brendel



More than 30 bridges are currently under construction around Missouri. By Memorial Day, that number will swell to nearly 50 as the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program kicks into high gear.

More than 200 bridges are scheduled for work this year, and in almost all cases, the bridges will be closed during construction to lower the cost and allow for speedy completion. Replacing the bridges in their current locations greatly reduces the need for additional right of way and costly roadway work, enabling more bridges to be improved within the project's \$700 million budget. In all, Safe & Sound will improve or replace 802 of the state's poorest bridges. As of April 22, 127 bridges had been repaired or replaced.

Most of the bridges being constructed in 2010 – about 150 – will be complete replacements as part of MoDOT's design-build contract with KTU Constructors.



The demolition of this Route 61 bridge over Buckeye Creek in Cape Girardeau County is part of the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Program.

KTU has set up regional offices in Lee's Summit, Bethany, Chillicothe, Sedalia and Benton to coordinate this year's work

that will take place primarily in Northwest Missouri, the Kansas City area, West Central Missouri and in the Bootheel. KTU's



Cathy Morrison

projects, by contract, are to last an average of 45 days – or half as long as the typical bridge replacement.

To help motorists stay abreast of the construction schedule and to navigate around these projects, MoDOT has created an interactive web map that includes suggested detour routes, project details and schedule information – <http://safeandsoundmap.modot.mo.gov/sas.htm>.

Kansas City's Interstate 29/35 Bond Bridge Project Is on Time, Budget

One Million Design, Construction Man-Hours Logged To Date

by Jennifer Benefield

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn, joined by kclCON Project Community Advisory Group and Workforce Development Committee members, and members of the Paseo Corridor Constructors contractor team, spoke with media on April 9 about construction milestones, workforce initiatives and the project team's exemplary safety record to date.

Standing on the north approach to the new Christopher S. Bond Bridge, Rahn said the \$245 million project is 67 percent complete and is on schedule to be finished by July 2011. He pointed out the structure's 316-foot center pylon with eight of its 40 stay cables already in place. Additionally, Rahn said roadway crews will soon complete a continuous 134-foot-wide bridge deck concrete pour – the single widest in state history. Some traffic will begin to cross over the Missouri River on the new bridge by the end of the year.

The interstate will be widened from four to six lanes and five interchanges are being reconstructed to improve safety and mobility, and to add capacity for the 102,000 motorists who travel the corridor daily.

Motorists are now experiencing the inconveniences associated with numerous lane and ramp closures as the majority of work is finalized this year. "Interstate and interchange reconstruction is taking place two miles in both directions of the bridge," said Rahn. "We thank the people of Kansas City for their patience during construction."

Rahn also talked about transportation's role in supporting jobs and Kansas City's economic growth. "At the peak of construction, this project will employ as many as 450 people." Up to \$1.25 million project dollars also are being used to grow a more diverse workforce in the



Paseo Corridor Constructors

Standing on the north approach to the new Christopher S. Bond Bridge over the Missouri River in Kansas City, MoDOT Director Pete Rahn (center) tells media that the \$245 million Interstate 29/35 "kclCON" design-build project is 67 percent complete and is on schedule to be finished by July 2011.

Kansas City region. Seventy minority, female, and economically disadvantaged On-The-Job Trainees have contributed approximately 63,000 hours to the project, working alongside professionals and skilled tradesmen to gain valuable train-

ing needed to sustain long-term careers in heavy highway construction.

Additional information is available on the project's website: www.kcicon.com or on Facebook by searching "kclCON Project."

Inside

5

Something to Talk About

Motor Carrier Services benefits from internal blog in CO

8



Culvert Storm II
D3 embraces challenge to clean and repair culverts

10



A Safer Trip
Media guard cable installation begins on Route 63 in D5

13



Improved Traffic Flow
New automated system in D8 puts better traffic information on horizon

15



Double Honors
D10 receives two awards for paving excellence

A Cut Above the Rest

Mowing Efficiencies Offer Solution with Cuts

by Melissa Black

More-efficient mowing methods, newer equipment, better tracking and herbicide usage changes are all best practices being used that are allowing MoDOT to make the most with what we have, even with the latest cuts in statewide mowing.

“These days, it’s even more important to share best practices and be as efficient as possible,” says Don Hillis, System Management director. “We’re cutting back on some of our mowing and litter collection in order to save money that can be used to take care of our roads, but that just means we need to continue to work hard to be more efficient.”

MoDOT tracks the average annual mowing cost per acre and the total acres of roadside vegetation managed by mowing and/or herbicide treatments. Costs are a total of in-house mowing, contractor and farmer mowing and herbicide treatments.

Since last spring, District 7 has come up with a more efficient mowing method as well as a way to more accurately track the number of acres they mow. This more-efficient mowing method means less lost productivity time, and less time to mow than before. And the results speak for themselves since they went from needing several days to mow their entire interstate system to 2 ½ days.



Districts 5 and 10 also are reducing mowing cycles, the number of acres mowed in each cycle, and using plant growth regulators to reduce the need for mowing. By making these changes, they can be more efficient, have a more consistent look across the district and reduce the amount spent on mowing.

Some districts are using more 20-foot mowers instead of the traditional 15-foot mowers, which means even with mowing cuts, employees make the best use of the time they have for mowing. Herbicide usage has been increased in appropriate areas as well, further reducing the amount of mowing actually needed.

“With better tracking, equipment and sharing best practices we can all increase efficiency and improve productivity, even with our mowing cuts,” Hillis says.

MoDOT is Changing Its Stripes

to Save Money

by Melissa Black

With tough economic times affecting everyone, saving money where we can is critical. That’s why a new striping system that will help MoDOT save \$1.5 million a year, while still providing safe, durable and reflective roadway stripes is good news for Missourians.

“Pavement marking technology is constantly evolving, in order to make roads as safe as possible, in the most cost-effective way,” says Eileen Rackers, MODOT Traffic Division engineer. “Being able to see the pavement marking is crucial, especially at night and in bad weather conditions, but being able to do that at a fraction of the cost is even better.”

MoDOT began the change on major divided highways from a high-performance tape to a retro reflective paint and bead system with the projects advertised for the April 9 bid letting. The cost saving of going from tape to paint are nearly \$3 per foot.

“We’ve been happy with the reflective tape we’ve been using for the past several years,” Rackers says. “But now we are making tough decisions to save money. We feel that we can get a good, highly visible paint product that costs less while still maintaining safety for our transportation system, and meeting our customer’s expectations.”

The new system for lane lines on major divided highways will have several components:

- A liquid binder, either epoxy or high-build paint will be used.
- Reflective beads will be required so that lines will be visible even during wet conditions.
- The pavement marking will be installed in a groove that should double the life of the paint since it will be protected from plows and exposed to less traffic wear.
- Contrast markings will be used on concrete pavements to provide the necessary daytime visibility.
- The pavement marking will be included on each individual project rather than a statewide contract.
- Edgelines and other pavement markings will not be changing at this time.

“We’ve used these products before,” Rackers says. “But this will be the first time we’ve installed them on a statewide level in a groove, which should make the stripes more durable and longer lasting.”

MoDOT’s total striping program includes about 98,000 line miles, with 26,000 line miles being major highway. A similar paint system was installed on selected routes in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas last summer with positive results.

Meet Your Commissioners



This month we’re learning more about Missouri Highways and Transportation Commissioner Stephen R. Miller.

Q: Please tell us a little about your background and/or career.
A: I have lived in the Kansas City area all of my life. I grew up in a large family, as the oldest of nine children. I now have 28 nieces and nephews just on my side of the family. I graduated from Rockhurst High School in Kansas City and then earned three degrees from the University of Notre Dame – a Bachelor of Arts, a Juris Doctorate and a Master of Arts. I played soccer in high school

and college, and was a three-time monogram winner at Notre Dame. I had the opportunity to spend one year of law school in London, which was a fascinating experience.

I’ve been a practicing trial lawyer for 28 years, first in a firm founded by my father and now with my own firm, Miller Schirger, LLC. Much of my practice focuses on the construction industry and many cases have involved transportation.

My wife, Susan, and I will celebrate our 20th anniversary this year. Together we helped found Turning Point, a center to assist patients and their families suffering from chronic illnesses such as cancer. We have two daughters who are in 7th and 9th grade.

Q: What attracted you to becoming part of the MHTC?
A: Serving on the MHTC was not something I had ever considered or sought. I was approached, however, by community leaders whom I greatly respected, and was asked if I would consider having my name put forward to the Governor. I was intrigued by the request and ultimately consented. I knew that MoDOT was facing a critical time with the challenging economy and funding issues and thought that my pro-

fessional experience could be of value. It seemed like a great chance for public service and to expand my own horizons. I have not been disappointed. I’ve been very impressed by the people I’ve had a chance to work with at MoDOT.

Q: What has been your most interesting experience as part of the Commission?
A: The general experience I’ve enjoyed most has been the opportunity to travel to different communities in the state, to meet local community leaders, and to see the tremendous pride Missourians take in their communities. The chance to spend more time in new places around Missouri has enabled me to learn more about my own home state. It has also been enjoyable getting to know my fellow commissioners and interacting with MoDOT management on complex and challenging matters.

Q: What have you learned about Missouri transportation?
A: The breadth of what MoDOT works with is amazing, from construction to legislative and policy issues. I’ve been impressed by the many modes of transportation where MoDOT has a focus, and I’ve seen firsthand the strength of the connection between MoDOT and economic development. It has really

been driven home to me how much of what MoDOT does impacts the vitality of our state.

Q: What has been your favorite road trip or vacation, in Missouri or otherwise?
A: Early summer each year, my family and I take a camping trip in Missouri. We have enjoyed many areas including Roaring River State Park and sites along the Current River.

Q: What are your hobbies and interests?
A: I have coached youth soccer for 11 years with the Kansas City Strikers Soccer Club. I also enjoy tennis, hiking, snow skiing and yoga.

Q: What would most MoDOT employees not know about you?
A: I’m up early most mornings to exercise. I practice and teach yoga three days a week at 6 a.m. It’s called Hot Yoga, where the room is 110 degrees, warming your core and your muscles to allow greater flexibility. I also work out with a strength-training group – we’ve dubbed ourselves the “Morning Maniacs” and meet at 5:30 a.m. several days each week.

Operation Orange Success Continues to Grow

by Sally Oxenhandler

More than 100 state buildings and other landmarks joined the fight against work zone fatalities and injuries by participating in Operation Orange 2010, our signature effort to turn significant Missouri landmarks orange.

One of the most notable newcomers to this year’s list was the iconic stone bear in front of the Jefferson State Office Building in Jefferson City. “This

Ferris wheel, the St. Louis Zoo, Unity Village in Lee’s Summit, the Boone County Courthouse, the Shelter Insurance Fountain in Columbia, Hammonds Field in Springfield, the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge in Cape Girardeau, the Farm Bureau headquarters in Jefferson City and the Branson Landing.

In 2009, 13 people were killed and 670 were injured in work zones, an increase



Motorists were asked to “bear” with us during Work Zone Awareness Week April 19-23.

prominent statue gave us a great opportunity to ask motorists to “bear” with us as we work to improve their roads,” said Community Relations Director Shane Peck, who came up with the idea for Operation Orange.

Other sites promoting work zone safety during Work Zone Awareness Week, April 19-23, included the Six Flags

from 2008 when 12 people were killed and 599 were injured. Inattention, following too closely, improper lane use, driving too fast and failing to yield were the top five reasons for work zone accidents last year.

For more information, visit www.modot.org/operationorange.

New Online Employment Application

The Human Resources division is now offering a new method for employees to submit their employment application online. The online internal opportunity application, which can be found on the MoDOT intranet site at <http://wwwwi/intranet/jobs/main.html>, allows employees to fill out the application online and submit it to Human Resources electronically.

In addition to accessing the application from the intranet site, employees can submit an application from the department’s external website. It is challenging for most employees, particularly those working in the field, to find time

during the day to complete the application at work. This new feature is designed to provide employees the opportunity to complete the application from the comfort of their home or another location.

The new system is designed to be user friendly and will automatically populate certain employee information for you. Once you create a profile in the new system, the information will remain on file and is readily available the next time you wish to apply for a vacancy. The Human Resources division hopes you will find the new system to be beneficial to you as an employee and wishes you success with your career.

Fond Farewell



An overflowing crowd gathered in the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Hearing Room to express their sentiments to outgoing Director Pete Rahn at a farewell reception on April 15. Rahn expressed his pleasure in leading TEAM MoDOT, while Chief Engineer Kevin Keith and Chief Financial Officer Robert Broeker kicked off the well wishes. Rahn’s last day with the department was April 23.

Employees Raise Funds for the Fallen Workers’ Memorial

by Matt Hiebert

The Fallen Workers’ Memorial will be more than another monument in Jefferson City. It will stand as a tribute to the men and women who gave their lives in service to Missouri.

Funds for the memorial are generated by donations. With a total cost of \$94,937, funding still has a long way to go before construction begins.

Here are some ways many MoDOT employees, districts and divisions are trying to make the monument a reality.

Pedaling Across America

In District 8, it will be “people power” raising cash. This June, Kris Sandgren, maintenance crew leader, will be riding his bicycle from Washington to Jefferson City ... and we mean the state of Washington.

Sandgren will ride his bicycle from Anacortes, Wash., to the Missouri capital city. The journey will cover 2,500

hundred miles and take nearly a month to complete. He will cross ten states and two mountain ranges.

“When I first heard about the monument, I thought it was a great idea,” Sandgren said. “Some of our losses were close to home. It made me think about the monument a lot harder when it happened to people I knew.”

Sandgren hopes employees will pledge one cent per mile for his ride.

“That would be a \$25 donation per employee,” Sandgren said. “If even a third of our employees pledged that much we would have the rest of the money to finish the memorial.”

To make a donation, or pledge by the mile, donations can be sent to District 7 Highway Credit Union, Attn: Dave B. Taylor, 3901 East 32nd Street, Suite A, Joplin, MO 64804.

Ride for Remembrance

Two-wheelers are playing an important fundraising role in Jefferson City. But these are the motorized variety.

Now on its second year, the Ride for Remembrance is an event for the whole family. Based on a road rally format, participants start driving from locations all over the state, ending at the Jefferson City Jaycees Fairground. Motorcycles are the dominant form of transportation, but Ashley Halford, senior human resources specialist, wants to encourage classic cars and trucks to make the ride.

“Last year we had 300 motorcyclists participate and we hope to get that many again this year,” Halford said. “We’re also trying to bump up participation for classic automobiles and trucks.”

Funds for the memorial will be raised by participating vendors selling food, T-shirts and souvenirs. A bounce house, Buckle Bear and the Highway Patrol’s



Kris Sandgren

rollover simulator will also be on hand.

“We’re still looking for more vendors,” Halford said. “It’s free for them. There’s no set up fee. We just ask they donate a portion of their proceeds to the memorial.”

For more information on riding, vending or just attending the Ride for Remembrance, contact Ashley Halford at 573-526-1229. You can also visit www.

continued on page 4

Employees Raise Funds

continued from page 3

rf#2010.com or <http://wwwi/intranet/hr/rideforremembrance2010.htm>.

Discount St. Louis Cardinal tickets

Last year, MoDOT employees and the St. Louis Cardinals raised more than \$4,000 for the memorial by selling discounted tickets to MoDOT employees.

“It’s a triple play,” said Kara Price, community relations specialist for District 6. “Our employees get discounted tickets, the Cardinals fill seats and money is raised for the memorial.”

Two more dates remain. Tickets are available for games against the Los Angeles Angels on May 22 and the Oakland A’s on June 20.

A special Web site, www.stlcardinals.com/modot, has been set up to purchase tickets.

“All the employees have to do is click on a link. They’ll be taken to a special page with the offer,” said Price.

Fallen Workers’ Memorial Cookbook

If motorcycles and baseball aren’t your thing, there is a tastier way to contribute.

Cindy Kremer, senior design technician for District 5, said they’re still looking for recipes to fill the Fallen Workers’ Memorial Cookbook.

“We’ve got a hundred recipes, but our goal is 500,” Kremer said. “We want to have the cookbook printed in mid-June so it will be ready before Christmas.”

Kremer invites all employees to throw something in the recipe pot. If typing it up is a problem, Kremer said she’d do it herself, just get her the hard copy.

“If we hit our goal of 500 recipes, we’ll sell the cookbook for \$15,” Kremer said. “If we only get 300 we’ll sell in for \$10....so send those recipes!”

The publication will contain the names of MoDOT’s fallen workers. Learn more by visiting <http://d5web/cookbook.htm>.

This is only a sample of the many efforts to raise money for the memorial. Many divisions are hosting smaller events to generate cash. For example, on Fridays at Motor Carrier Services, employees can donate a dollar to wear tennis shoes or their favorite team jersey or tee. Ask if your division or district is doing something that’s not on this list.

For more information on the memorial, visit www.moshea.org.

Five-Year Direction Will Guide Future Tool and Equipment Challenges

With the winners still excited from their honors at the Tool and Equipment Innovation Showcase held March 30 in Springfield, sights are now being set on how to revamp the contest to better reflect our new five-year direction.

A statewide team will be established to iron out the final details, although some particulars are already known. For example, the program will be broadened to include processes and there will be six focus areas with one overall winner. The areas, straight from the five-year direction, are mowing, striping, litter pick up, signing, fleet reduction and pavement maintenance on low-volume routes. Districts will still hold local competitions, but only the top innovations statewide will be featured in the showcase.

“It’s only logical that we focus our innovative efforts on those areas where

we’re reducing spending,” said Don Hillis, director of system management. “I know we’ll see a lot of impressive ideas come out of this effort, just like we always have.”

MoDOT employees once again delivered an array of outstanding workplace solutions at the 2010 showcase, which highlighted 37 innovations in the areas of snow and ice response, preventive pavement maintenance and drainage. Winners ran the gamut from a customized, high-pressure nozzle that can be attached to a flusher truck to make cleaning culverts faster and easier to a bracket that allows crews to install pipes without having to get into trenches.

For more information, including the complete list of showcase winners, visit <http://wwwi/intranet/or/SolutionsAt-Work/Tec09/index.htm>.

Melanie A. Lanigan	D4
Cary D. Simcoe	D5
Michael J. Arnett	D5
Kelly M. Colter	D5
Scott L. Snelling	D5
Roy A. Shoemaker	D6
Jack C. Kratky	D6
Roy A. Crites	D6
Thomas L. Harris	D6
Thomas G. Witte	D6
David M. Brunjes	D6
Joyce E. Shaw	D7
Jerry L. Garner	D7
Reuben J. Sanchez	D8
Jason M. Worley	D8
James R. McGinnis	D8
Joshua T. Burks	D8
Bradley L. Williams	D8
Darrell R. Cook	D8
Bryan D. Fleming	D8
Charles R. Stowers	D8
Jason A. Ferguson	D9
Jennifer E. Atkinson	D9
Christopher E. Miller	D9
Elgin D. Bogan	D10
Christopher J. Marler	D10
Jamie L. Qualls	D10
Timothy R. Crader	D10
Jason L. Estes	D10
Michael R. Schwendemann	D10
Patrick L. Robinson	CO
Allen J. Wankum	CO
Amy B. Blankenship	CO
Kathy M. Murphy	CO
Gregory S. Breuer	CO
Keith L. Cason-Gossett	CO
Robert J. Brandt	CO
Timothy M. Oligschlaeger	CO

5 Years	
Lynn M. Anderson	D1
Jason A. Giesken	D1
John R. Reeves	D2
Jeb S. Stephenson	D2
Billy J.Ewing	D2
Elbert S. Wire	D2
Joshua E. Wester	D3
Joshua D. Waelder	D3
Brandi J. Baldwin	D3
Marc W. Hohe	D4
Matthew J. Haug	D4
James A. Musil	D4
Sonia A. Martinez	D4
Nathan D. Conrad	D4
John R. Maedel	D4
Brian R. Burger	D4
Jeannie M. Hoff	D5
Travis S. Lorenz	D5
Daniel W. Nelson	D5
Janet E. Edler	D5
Cindy L. Kremer	D5
Michael D. Parker	D6

Franklin T. Vance	D6
Jason W. Ivie	D6
Gerald C. Lyston	D6
Dustin W. Crain	D7
Jamie M. Leavell	D7
Aaron L. Underwood	D7
Travis L. Peterson	D7
James A. Wilson	D7
Ryan P. Ward-Melton	D8
Melanie L. Curlile	D9
Monte W. Tinnon	D10
Donald G. Treat	D10
Bree K. McMurray	CO
Kyle E. Grayson	CO
Darius J. Wynn	CO
William E. Robinett	CO
Kendra McLelland	CO

In Memoriam

Active		
Larry Williams	D6	Mar. 4
Retirees		
Ben J. Bauer	D6	Mar. 1
Samuel E. Riggins	D9	Mar. 2
James A. Martin	D10	Mar. 5
Sherman F. Williams	D7	Mar. 6
John Agnew	D0	Mar.12
Virgil Grunden	D7	Mar. 16
Gloria J. Hoehn	D10	Mar. 19
Lloyd R. Deckard	D10	Mar. 21
Ray E. Reis	D7	Mar. 24
Garth E. McKinney	D9	Mar. 24
Albert R. Magee	D1	Mar. 24
Delbert T. Wrinkle	D8	Mar. 24
Oras E. Bowers	D8	Mar. 26

March Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Randoll Robbins	D10	31
David Tropf	D10	26
Danny Browning	D1	25
Kenneth Markwell	D1	18
Laverne Stull	D2	21
Wayne Neagles	D3	19
Gary Carson	D4	31
Carl King	D4	9
Gary Loveless	D4	26
Larry Peirce	D4	7
Edward Martin	D5	37
Terry Poucher	D6	27
Paul Richardson	D7	27
Jon Knight	D8	26
Raymond Jansen	CO	40
Turner Bond	CO	13



Director’s Blog Gets MCS Talking

What was the boss thinking when she made that decision?

Motor Carrier Services division employees actually get an answer to that question when they visit Jan’s Blog on

Not that the rollout was without problems. Skouby started her blogging career by congratulating her team for their 2009 accomplishments, including record customer satisfaction



the MCS SharePoint site: <http://sharepoint/systemdelivery/MC/Pages/default.aspx>

Good news. Changes. Challenges. Compliments. Whatever is on MCS Director Jan Skouby’s mind goes into her blog.

“I’m often out of the office. When I’m here, meetings take a lot of my folks’ time,” said Skouby. “Some weeks, it’s very difficult to talk with the MCS team about the things that concern them. The blog on SharePoint gives us the chance to ‘talk’ as a group.”

But what if employees don’t want their comments out for everyone to see?

“I’m very lucky that Team MCS is anything but shy. Employees have disagreed with each other in their comments, but remain supportive of each other,” said Skouby. “But if someone wants to talk one-on-one, we still do plenty of that. Our blog is another tool in the toolbox.”

scores. Then she hit them with the big news. Like everyone else at MoDOT, MCS would have to work better, faster, cheaper and leaner. Reorganization is imminent. She sat back, expecting employees to voice concern, and received not a single comment.

It turns out that SharePoint permissions for comments were not activated. Lesson learned. Once that was accomplished, employees started to share ideas.

Guest bloggers from the MCS administrative team also take their turns on the electronic soapbox.

“I like that I can get an idea, sit down and write it out, hit enter and start a discussion,” said Michelle Teel, MCS Assistant Director. “When I get an idea at a conference halfway across the country, I don’t have to wait to share it and start a debate. It’s a lot of fun.”

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National Council Appointee

Depue Selected to Represent all State Transportation Departments on National Council

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has appointed Leanna Depue, MoDOT’s highway safety division director, to the Advisory Council on Transportation Statistics.

Depue is the representative for all state transportation agencies.

“I’m honored to be selected and happy to have this opportunity to serve and represent the departments of transportation,” said Depue.

This council is a 10-member prestigious panel that advises the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Bureau of Transportation Statistics, which is part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration.

The panel’s key objective is to advise BTS on the quality, reliability, consistency, objectivity, and relevance of transportation statistics and analyses collected, supported or disseminated by the Bureau and the Department of Transportation.

Depue will have the opportunity to learn as well to advise.

“There is a great deal to learn about how the Bureau functions, as well as the perspectives of fellow council members that represent many modes of transportation,” said Depue. “My goal is to offer ways of improving the usability of transportation data so that all of the



Shaun Schmitz

state agencies can use it to their full advantage,” said Depue.

In a statement, Sec. LaHood said “We are bringing together a knowledgeable group from diverse parts of the transportation community to provide their expertise to the Department. The new ACTS members will assist the Department in coordinating data and statistics with our work on transportation systems for the future.”

ACTS was created by the Safe Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users of 2005.

The new panel will have their first meeting in Washington D.C. in June.

Earth Day 2010



Cathy Morrison



Scores of Missouri school children stopped by the MoDOT tent at the annual Earth Day celebration and agreed to keep Missouri litter free by signing the “litter pledge.” MoDOT staff also distributed several thousand white pine tree seedlings at the event, which was held April 23 on the Capitol grounds.

D1

Northwest

Last Month in the Northwest District

by M. Elaine Justus



Cathy Morrison

Far and away, our best story this month is the one about Maintenance Supervisor Bill Bledsoe and Regional Maintenance Supervisor Larry Parsons bringing home a \$10,000 check from the Tool and Equipment Challenge for the Snow and Ice Response Division.

March 30 will be remembered as the day the Northwest District came home with the top money. Ten thousand dollars isn't a bad day's pay and Regional Maintenance Supervisor Larry Parsons



and Maintenance Supervisor Bill Bledsoe were happy to accept the check from MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. Their invention, called the V-Bed Removal Tool, is a slick idea involving about \$52 worth of material that allows operators to install or remove a spreader in a fraction of the time traditionally needed. It also keeps people on the ground and away from climbing ice covered trucks.

6

The Safe & Sound visits with stakeholders continued in the last month. Representatives from law enforcement, schools, hospitals, postal workers, area farms and even windmill operations attended. The message of these meetings, which are usually held before the



Holly L. Murphy

MoDOT met with the Caldwell County Stakeholders to discuss the Safe & Sound Program March 15.

pre-construction meetings for the bridges, are followed by press releases, direct mail pieces, and occasionally newspaper ads when the closure dates are known.



M. Elaine Justus

MoDOT's Regional Blueprint Coalition shared information about safe driving at a recent town hall meeting in St. Joseph.

On March 22, the St. Joseph Youth Alliance hosted a gathering for high school and junior high school students and their parents at Huffman United Methodist Church in St. Joseph. They came to hear Milton Creagh, a respected nationwide speaker, talk about the challenge of taking responsibility for your actions. Over 100 parents and children attended this inspiring event.



M. Elaine Justus

Later that same day, they visited with the DeKalb County Stakeholders. KQTV, the local television station, covered the event for the evening news.

Speaking of inspiring events, we recently awarded a check for \$250 and a beautiful banner to St. Joseph Christian High School as the "Highest Overall Usage" percentage winner during our 2009 Battle of the Belt. They have decided to donate their winnings to a program that builds water wells in Ethiopia. Last year, Albany High School, who won the same category, donated their money to the American Cancer Society.

Just in case you are more interested in the "let's blow something up" kind of story, we have a little something for



Lana Allen

you, too. The Northwest District has been assisting the Kansas City area with some projects, and, on the morning of April 3, we watched them take 100 pounds of dynamite and remove an overpass on Interstate 29.



Holly L. Murphy

Mrs. Connie Hale, MoDOT retiree and Blueprint Outreach/Educational Coordinator (left), presented a check for \$250 and a beautiful silver banner to St. Joseph Christian High School for their 2009 Battle of the Belt achievement of "Highest Overall Usage" in the Northwest District.

Bleeding Heart

by M. Elaine Justus

Senior Highway Designer Jack Smith has been donating his blood for a long time. It's something he believes in and something he believes accomplishes some positive good. He used to donate blood, but has most recently switched to donating platelets because you can donate more frequently, and the need

for platelets is so great. When Jack made his 100th donation, he was officially made a member of the "Century Society" and awarded a beautiful glass sculpture.

His belief that his donations were of value was confirmed recently, when he

received a call from Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City.

Immediately following his donation, his platelets were shipped to them (platelets have a very limited life span). They were going to use them for a transfusion for a very young child desperately in need, but they had to make sure Jack had not eaten nuts because the child had a severe allergy to them.



Holly L. Murphy

Senior Highway Designer Jack Smith shows his award.



Holly L. Murphy

The glass award reads, "Century Society" with the Community Blood Center logo beneath it.

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D2

North Central

Out in the District

Spring Employee Meetings

When April rolls around, so do employee spring meetings. Senior management, supervisors and other employees this busy season, and asked that they continue to be patient, flexible, and part of the team.



District Engineer Dan Niec addresses the five-year plan and shares the direction for the district.

take to the road and visit with every employee in the district to share information, discuss current topics and look at what lies ahead for the busy maintenance and construction season.

District Engineer Dan Niec discussed the statewide five-year plan and how it relates to the district. He shared the progress made on issues like improving our major roads and eliminating all structurally deficient major bridges. He also noted the challenge to keep our

Transportation Planning Coordinator Roy Hogsett then discussed the past, present and future of federal funding and the current efforts of the Missouri Transportation Alliance group.

Next, it was all about employees as Assistant District Engineer Kevin James recognized employees for their contributions to the district. Just some of the recognitions given were: the winners in the Tool & Equipment Challenge; employees who worked in other districts,

had long-time safety or service records, took on additional responsibilities, volunteered to lead safety, CPR and other training; and for the great job done during winter operations.

Maintenance Superintendents also spoke to their work units thanking them for a job well done.

To discuss all the upcoming work in this year's construction program, Construction Engineer Dennis Brucks and Resident Engineers James Gillespie, Aaron Peck and Jeff Gander gave an overview of what our construction crews will be up to this summer,



A busy year for maintenance and construction.

major roads good, improve our minor roads, and increase customer satisfaction despite a declining construction program.

Niec thanked employees for all the great work they have done and will do



Niec (left) presents Maintenance Supervisor David Hyle (right) with the 100 percent completion CPR award.

including completing the Route 36 corridor project, the Miami Bridge over the Missouri River and the resurfacing of Route 65.

Maintenance and Traffic Engineer Travis Wombwell talked about the upcoming work on our minor roads and bridges, and the operational plan for areas such as signing, striping and mowing. He also thanked employees for their efforts during winter operations.

Other topics included:

- Human Resources Manager Ellen Gehringer provided an HR update sharing information about changes in MAPS, automated applications, employee satisfaction surveys, the

employee fund and more.

- Kevin James discussed overtime and flex-time policies.
- Twelve members of the D2EAEC team talked about various topics including their mission, the benefit of having this group in the district, the characteristics of a successful concern and feedback from

an employee survey.

- Health and Safety Manager Shari Dye, Safety Officer Corey Besgrove and Senior RM Technician Jamie Martin offered congratulations to employees on three accomplishments. 1) In 2009, 98 percent of employees completed the CPR training program; 2) In 2009 the district had zero lost work days; and 3) For the past two years the district had the lowest incident rate of all districts, meaning employees are working safe and having very few incidents requiring medical treatment.

Employees had an opportunity to brainstorm cost efficiency ideas in any area of operation. One idea was chosen as the best at each meeting, and once

all the meetings have been held a district winning idea will be chosen.

It was an ambitious agenda with a lot of information to discuss. Employees asked good questions and participated in the discussions, giving everyone an opportunity to fully understand our direction.



Maintenance Superintendent Donald Bigby gives recognition to his work units.

Three for Number One!

District employees brought home three first place honors from the statewide Tool & Equipment Challenge, more than any other district. Congratulations!

Drainage Tools Category - CMP Lifting Bracket by Jeff Lewis, Jeff Peters, Kenny Jolliffe and Robert Lockard. Preventative Maintenance Tools Cat-

egory - In-line Asphalt Filter by Keith Hartwig, Jeff Miller, Andy Willis, Donald Standley and Sam Stockdall.

Snow and Ice Response Equipment Category - Plow Lift Chain Bracket by Rick Gaul.



Assistant District Engineer Kevin James (left) presents the check and certificate for the In-line Asphalt Filter to Donald Standley, Sam Stockdall and Andy Willis (left to right). Not pictured are Keith Hartwig and Jeff Miller.

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D3

Northeast

Taking the Culverts by Storm

The Northeast District loves competition, so when a statewide challenge was issued to clean and repair all culverts, crews immediately embraced the challenge. Known as ‘Culvert Storm II’, districts were asked to get the culverts in shape in a short time frame and before they started their normal spring and summer operations.

“We finished our work by the end of March, taking care of more than 300

culverts over the winter and early spring,” said Maintenance Superintendent Butch Mundle. Maintenance and special crews worked together to get the jobs done quickly. They removed debris, cleaned channels, repaired scours and erosion and stenciled numbers on the culverts.

“We enjoy the challenge of quick response and will continue to monitor these areas for future needs,” Mundle added.



North area crews worked on erosion control near West Quincy as part of the Culvert Storm II project.

Utility Usage Reduced

To continue improving on our “green” efforts, the Northeast District set a goal of reducing utility usage by 10 percent in 2010. “We had our work cut out for us!” said Assistant District Engineer Dave Silvester, who issued the challenge last year. “We were 9.67 percent lower in usage than where we were last year, and we are very happy with this number,” he said.

Every building in Maintenance Superintendent Rick Ellison’s area reduced usage by more than 10 percent, with a total reduction of 23.35 percent, which beat out last year’s winner Kenny Hollocher’s area who had an overall reduction of 17.64 percent. “Utility rates, especially electricity,

continue to increase, so the usage is a better way of comparing our ‘green’ efforts,” said Business and Benefits Manager, Sherri McGregor.

Paris and the Paris Mechanic Buildings was the first-place team with a reduction of 41.99 percent.



Assistant District Engineer Dave Silvester presented the coveted traveling utility trophy to Maintenance Superintendent Rick Ellison whose area had the largest decrease in utility usage in 2009.

Around the District



Congratulations to Joe Kiser and Heath Otte on their honorable mention in the Tool & Equipment Challenge for the Tractor Plow and Spreader. Two other entries were included in the showcase - the culvert bander from Cappeln and the motorgrader fenders from Eolia. Kiser and Otte were personally recognized by Pete Rahn and Don Hillis at the awards ceremony.



Gary Tolivar “rallied the troops” at home to send donated Girl Scout cookies to military troops serving overseas. It’s a personal issue for Tolivar since his son, Jacob, is serving in Afghanistan. He raised enough money to send 103 boxes to Jacob, Brian Gard, a D3 employee, and their friends overseas.



Beth Page, Jennifer Hinson and Laura White encourage an employee of a local business to consider participation in the Adopt-A-Highway program at the Hannibal Business to Business Expo. Their “Decomposition Game” was a really trashy topic at the event and drew several raised eyebrows when participants learned the number of years different types of trash take to decompose.



LaBelle Maintenance Supervisor Jody Geisendorfer, and all maintenance supervisors, participated in a brainstorming cost-saving session using the new five-year direction as a guide. From mowing to materials, several ideas were presented and will be considered over the next few months.

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D4

Kansas City Area

Groundbreakings on Two Major Projects Excite Kansas City

by Michele Compton

On two perfect spring days in Missouri, local citizens turned out in big numbers to celebrate the kick-off of two major construction projects guaranteed to delight Kansas City residents.

On March 30, citizens, news media and many others applauded the groundbreaking of several improvements along I-70.

The busy I-70 corridor into downtown is playing host to many orange barrels this season, but one project in particular promises to ease congestion and streamline the flow of traffic.

The stretch of highway where I-435 meets I-70 will be under construction through 2011 in an effort to reduce bottlenecks and improve both capacity and access through a busy commuter corridor. More than 200,000 motorists used this thoroughfare to reach the city center every day. Improving that commute is a welcome necessity.

The second groundbreaking brought out the tennis shoes and the wheels.

On March 31, cyclists from both Kansas and Missouri joined MoDOT and city officials to open construction on the bike and pedestrian improve-



Major improvements have begun on the busy I-70 and I-435 Interchange. A groundbreaking ceremony marked the start of this major project in Kansas City.



Many turned out for the ceremony to mark the beginning of work to provide bike and pedestrian improvements for the Heart of America Bridge.

ments for the Heart of America Bridge.

As part of regular maintenance, this 25-year-old bridge will be retrofitted to accommodate safe, barrier protected options for walkers, joggers, cyclists or any alternative traffic looking for a way across the Missouri River to Kansas City.

Kansas City was recently named one of the top 50 cities for bicyclists and it is projects such as the bike/pedestrian path on this bridge that make that happen.

Both of these projects were funded in part by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

For more information on these, or any of the Kansas City district projects, visit our website at <http://www.modot.org/kansascity>.

New Sidewalks Provide Safer Mobility

by Kerri Lewis

D4 completed another American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project for the Clay County area. Work included enhancements along Route 169 in Smithville. MoDOT, state, county and city officials celebrated the completion of these improvements with a ribbon-cutting ceremony April 15.

Improvements include the addition of new sidewalks and pedestrian accommodations at intersections to improve safety, increase mobility, and provide better access for pedestrians in the area.



City officials, MoDOT, Smithville High School track students, and residents cut the ribbon to celebrate the safety enhancements through Smithville. The pedestrian signal at the corner of Route 169 and Main Street provides safer mobility for the many people who use it daily.

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D5

Central

Median Guard Cable Installation Begins on U.S. Route 63

Over 24,000 vehicles travel on U.S. Route 63 between Columbia and Jefferson City every day. It's a busy highway that handles thousands of commuters.

MoDOT is taking one more step to make that trip safer for motorists by installing median guard cable between the northbound and southbound lanes.



Grant Lawson

Crews place asphalt along the southbound passing lane of Route 63 as part of the median guard cable project.

Crews with APAC-Missouri, Inc. began work on the project on April 12. They began work at Route H in Boone County and will work south to Route 54 in Callaway County. Then they'll place cable on Route 63 between Interstate 70 and Route AC in Columbia.

"Our goal is to install the cables where they have the greatest potential for reducing crashes," said Transportation Project Manager Jason Vander-



Grant Lawson

The cable will run along the southbound lanes, similar to cable on I-44.

feltz. "The cables have proven successful on interstate highways in Missouri and we believe they will also provide a great benefit for motorists using Route 63."

Median guard cable, made of three strands of steel cable, is designed to stop a vehicle from crossing into the opposing traffic lanes and colliding with other vehicles. It's generally used where medians are 60 feet wide or less. MoDOT began using guard cable in 2002 on Interstates 70 and 44 and has since installed more than 600 miles of cable in the medians of the state's busiest highways.

The success rate in Missouri has been significant. A study completed on I-70 showed that guard cable succeeded in stopping cars from crossing into the opposing lanes of traffic more than 98 percent of the time. And, while guard cables are not designed to prevent large vehicles, such as tractor-trailers, from crossing the median, there have been numerous

cases where the stretchable cable has kept large vehicles from entering the opposing lane of traffic.

The project will be complete in late summer 2010.

Around the District



Jennifer Ranabargar

Russellville middle school students toured the Materials Lab during a visit to MoDOT on March 19.

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Work Zone Safety Highlighted at News Conference

Sometimes the best way to convince people of your point is to show them exactly what you mean. So when the MoDOT's Central District held a news conference during Work Zone Awareness Week, we took reporters from the mid-Missouri area to an actual work zone on U.S. Route 63.

"Our construction and maintenance workers spend their days working in conditions like this," said Area Engineer Mike Schupp, as motorists whizzed by the district's concrete repair

crew. "They do what they can to make their work zone as safe as possible, but they need the help of every driver who passes them too."

Before witnessing the crew, reporters gathered at the Columbia maintenance building and heard from District Engineer Roger Schwartz on the risks involved with highway work.

"This construction season, \$1.2 billion worth of highway construction will be underway across the state, with about \$216 million in Central Missouri," said Schwartz. "We want every highway worker to return home to his or her family, and we want every motorist who travels through a work zone to reach their destination safely."

Missouri State Highway Patrol Lieutenant Vernon Dougan also spoke about work zone safety, explaining that work zone enforcement is one of their top priorities.

The news conference was held on April 19, and Work Zone Awareness Week was April 19-23.



Holly Dentner

District Engineer Roger Schwartz encouraged motorists to slow down and use caution in work zones.

District is First to Receive Automated Fuel System

Fuel stations at the Central District are getting an upgrade, and it's one that will spread across the entire state.

MoDOT is installing the automated FuelMaster system at all its fuel tanks to help us account for our petroleum products by tracking fuel deliveries, fuel dispensed at the pumps, and site inventory levels.

The Central District is the first at MoDOT to receive the upgrade, and work continues to install the equipment at all the maintenance buildings.

"The old 'pen and paper' system meant that you had to write down your name, org code, fuel type, gallons pumped, and other information to allow us to track how much fuel was being used when and where," said Corey Duemmel, senior procurement agent. "The automated system means you swipe the vehicle's fuel-tracking card, enter your PIN and odometer reading, and all the data is automatically in the system."

MoDOT had the equipment installed at four sites in the district during the first part of April. Installation at the remaining buildings continues through May.

"We've monitored these initial sites for accuracy through April,"

said Duemmel. "Everything is going smoothly and we're on track to install the equipment at two sites per day through the rest of the district."

The new system also monitors fuel levels in storage tanks, and transfers that data directly district computers so employees can track how many gallons are left in the tanks. Duemmel sees many benefits to the automated system.

"It affects the end users who fill up their equipment and vehicles, since it simplifies their process," he said. "But it also removes the manual entry of each fuel line transaction by individuals who were responsible for entering it into SAM II, which is the state's financial tracking system."

After the installation is complete in the Central District, it will begin in other districts across the state. The entire state should be on the system by summer 2011.



Holly Dentner

Senior Maintenance Worker Ian Ciolli types in his PIN before filling up at the Central District Office.

D6

St. Louis Area

St. Louis Kicks Off No MOre Trash! Bash With Multiple Efforts

by Kara Price

MoDOT, community partners and elected officials helped in making Missouri beautiful this spring by working toward a litter-free state. These partners picked up litter throughout April as part of the month-long, 2010 No MOre

officials. These groups addressed the media and the public in front of a giant trash mound at a news conference in North County to enforce the importance of no littering and to keep Missouri clean as a litter-free state. Then these



Phil Walka, St. Clair regional maintenance supervisor (left), and Carolyn Smith, District 6 Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator (right), pick up litter along the Interstate 44 on-ramp at Gray Summit for the Franklin County No MOre Trash! Bash.

Trash! Bash, which is sponsored by the Missouri departments of Transportation and Conservation.

A media event was held in early April to kick off the initiative with support from MoDOT, Adopt-A-Highway, St. Louis County and local elected

important partners picked up trash along a stretch of Interstate 270 at St. Charles Rock Road in honor of the No More Trash! Bash.

Other departments and area teams within MoDOT were active in the No More Trash! Bash efforts throughout



Brandon Anderson, Normandy maintenance supervisor (left), and Ken Cherry, Normandy regional maintenance supervisor (right), helped make the district No MOre Trash! Bash in North County a success. They set up the giant trash mound for the kickoff event/news conference to reinforce the importance of no littering and to keep Missouri clean and litter-free.

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Teri Feller, Cedar Hill regional maintenance supervisor (left), Kent Bequette, South Jefferson County maintenance superintendent (center) and other maintenance workers at Cedar Hill pick up litter along Route A near Route 21 for the South Jefferson County No MOre Trash! Bash.

April, including picking up litter along the interstates with each area’s community partners and Adopt-A-Highway volunteers.

The goal of the annual No MOre Trash! Bash is to spread awareness of Missouri’s litter problem and work toward a litter-free state. We need your help this year to help make Missouri more beautiful and keep it that way. Keeping litter off the roadways and out of the water is an important step in beautifying Missouri for another beautiful spring and summer.

Last year’s Bash had more than 838 groups participating with



A dedicated Adopt-A-Highway volunteer in Franklin County is participating in this year’s local No MOre Trash! Bash to help clean up major roads in this area.



Ed Hassinger, district engineer, helps kick off the St. Louis region’s No MOreTrash! Bash picking up litter along Interstate 270 at St. Charles Rock Road.

more than 10,068 volunteers. Hundreds of educational efforts were held in schools, at rest areas, at community events, during Earth Day celebrations, on radio talk shows, through Take Your Child to Work Day, news conferences, trash can painting events, television promotions and more. Altogether, 111,134 bags of trash were collected throughout Missouri (26,659 bags more than the previous year). Each year, MoDOT spends more than \$5 million to clear litter along highways throughout the state. The Adopt-A-Highway volunteers and Stream Team volunteers

spend countless hours during the year to help keep Missouri beautiful, but litter still accumulates in streams and along roads.

It’s easy to help during the annual Bash by either scheduling your own pickup or attending local or state cleanup events.

For more information about this year’s bash and how you can do your part, visit nomoretrash.org.

Bat Gate Improves Cave's Ecosystem

by Wendy Brunner-Lewis



Alan Leary

Widening Route 71 in McDonald County was legendary for creating odd situations in the first decade of 2000. Indian remains from 1000-1550 A.D. had to be relocated to a different area under the watchful eyes of the Caddo and Sac Osage tribes of Oklahoma.

A rare flatworm species was discovered in one of the area's many caves, and MoDOT relocated the alignment of the new road so as not to disturb the flatworm.

Another cave that was popular with vandals and was unsuccessfully commercialized in the 1950's by "Dad" Truitt, was saved in 2004 to avoid destroying the natural habitat of bats

and other cave creatures. Because the cave isn't structurally stable, the Missouri Department of Conservation recommended MoDOT install a gate to keep people out but still allow the bats to come and go freely, and allows the natural stream inside to flow as it has for thousands of years.

Caves & Karst, Inc., of Rolla built the bat-friendly gate in 2004 out of four-inch angled steel bars and tied the steel into the rock.

"The Conservation Department suggested we use angled steel because bats use sonar to navigate their way," said Senior Biological Specialist Alan Leary. "Sound bounces off the angled steel and guides bats through the gate. Rebar, which isn't angled, would affect the sonar, causing the bats to harm themselves trying to get in or out of the gate. They would leave the cave, thus affecting the cave's ecosystem and environment."

Prior to the gate's installation, the highest number of bats reported in the cave was about 25, Leary said. Most of those were Eastern Pipestrelles.

"There were also reports of salamander larvae in the cave, but they could not be identified to species," Leary continued. "They probably would not have lived to adulthood because of the human disturbances."

In January 2010, Leary visited the cave and observed over 250 Eastern Pipestrelles and four adult Ozark blind salamanders, also known as grotto salamanders.

"MoDOT normally isn't popular with cavers and spelunkers," Leary said, "but I think installing the gate to save



Alan Leary

the cave and its animals has mended those relationships. And we always like to do positive things for the environment."

Eastern Pipestrelle

- Small bat
- Tri-colored bodies: brown, reddish, black
- Nicknamed "butterfly bats" for their distinctive moth-like flight pattern
- Emerge from roost early in the evening
- Slow and erratic flight
- Eat every couple of seconds; they like flies
- Female bats roost in maternity colonies
- Usually have two babies at a time
- Hibernate in small groups
- Within three weeks newborns can care for themselves

Ozark Blind Salamander

- First cave-dwelling amphibian found in America
- Adults are pale, almost transparent
- 3-4" in length
- Comfortable in and out of water
- Nocturnal – avoid direct light
- Able to regenerate a lost limb or tail
- Undergo metamorphosis – larvae can see and have skin pigmentation; adults' skin is pale, eyes are non-functioning and eyelids have grown together
- Larvae feed on bat guano



12

Neosho Maintenance Takes First at Tool & Equipment Showcase

Congratulations to the Neosho Maintenance crew on placing first in the Preventive Maintenance: Equipment category at the Tool & Equipment Challenge Showcase in March! They fabricated pocket hitches for dump trucks to accept multiple attachments.

The crew won \$10,000 to go in their area's maintenance budget.

The Seneca Maintenance crew earned an honorable mention in the Snow & Ice Response category for their snow plow cradle. A 10-ton floor jack was

modified to install snow plow blades and backup blades.



The Neosho Maintenance crew, above, along with Seneca and Golden City (the other buildings that won the district Challenge), were treated to lunch to celebrate.

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D8

Springfield Area

New Automated System To Improve Traffic Flow

by Angela Eden

More timely and accurate traffic information is on the horizon for drivers on major state routes and city streets in Springfield and eventually will include Nixa, Ozark, Branson, Republic, Willard and Lebanon.

A contractor this summer will install additional traffic cameras, dynamic message signs and traffic detectors in Springfield, expanding the capabilities of the MoDOT-City of Springfield Transportation Management Center. The new Advanced Traffic Management System will be put in service by spring 2011.

The current system simply monitors traffic. It requires staffing the TMC to adjust signal timing.

The ATMS, which will encompass the existing system, will be developed over the next few years to have automated features that will kick in even when no one is stationed in the TMC. Ultimately, the cameras and detectors will be able to collect and send information that will automatically adjust signal timing and instantly post travel information on dynamic message signs.

TMC operators, when on duty, will have better tools “to respond more accurately and efficiently to traffic changes,” Traffic Operations Engineer Adam Humphrey said. “We can make real-time changes to the signal system.”

“We intend to be more proactive,” Humphrey said. The goal for the ATMS is to reduce inconvenience and irritation for drivers on heavily traveled state routes through the city, including I-44, Route 60, Route 65, Glenstone Avenue (Bus. Loop 44/Bus. Route 65) and East Sun-

shine Street (Route D) as well as major city streets.

In the meantime, the District 8 Signal Shop began in April building the communication network needed to make the ATMS devices function.

Traffic Supervisor Joe Dotson said the signal electricians are building from scratch what amounts to the central nervous system of the entire traffic management operation – a fiber optic communication network linking all the new ATMS devices with one another and with the TMC.

Dotson said his goal is to stay ahead of the contractor installing the ATMS devices while keeping up with signal trouble calls, maintaining traffic signals and street lights and carrying out utility locates. Mo-

DOT’s signal electricians are coordinating their work with city of Springfield workers building the network along major city streets such as National Avenue and Campbell Avenue.

Springfield’s ATMS will be unique in Missouri because it will manage traffic on freeways and city streets, not just freeways, Dotson said. That means his crew has no “blueprints” to work from but is planning and completing the installations as they go.

“WE are the network designers,” he said.

The district Information Systems group is helping out with technical assistance and advice on components needed and troubleshooting problems as they arise, Senior Information Systems Technologist Blaine Doss said.

“I’m helping them answer the question ‘How does it function now and how should it function in the future?’”



Senior Electrician Pat Turner, right, and Electrician Billy Adams splice fiber-optic cable to install a network switch at Chestnut Expressway and Grant Avenue for the new ATMS.



District 8 at Work

1. Wheatland Senior Maintenance Worker Tim Brenner adds surfactant needed to make herbicide effective. Brenner sprays herbicide to control weeds along Route 83 near Elkton, with Wheatland Senior Maintenance Worker Robin Jackson following in a “protection” truck.

2. District Design Liaison C.B. Alexander checks for undermining as he inspects a Dallas County bridge over Greasy Creek near Buffalo. His inspections are part of a systematic program to evaluate the safety and structural condition of off-system bridges and provide reports to each county and city.

3. Project Development Senior Administrative Technician Shay Wehmer, left, and Central Office Community Relations Coordinator Matt Hiebert put up Work Zone Awareness signs in front of Springfield city offices as part of MoDOT’s “Operation Orange” safety initiative. Other community participants in D8 are the Springfield-Greene County Library system, cities of Hollister, Pleasant Hope, Rogersville and Hermitage, the Branson Landing shopping area and Springfield Cardinals baseball club.

Construction Veteran Retires

by Angela Eden

Springfield Senior Construction Inspector Gail Hannaford

Service: 26 years (Hired Apr. 1, 1984)

Career: Rodman to construction technician, District 5, 1984-1990; construction technician to senior construction technician, District 4, 1990-1993; construction inspector to senior construction inspector, District 8, 1993-2010

Memorable accomplishment: Building the new four-lane section of Route 54 at Holts Summit north of Jefferson City in the late 1980s

Favorite project: Helping build the new northbound Route 54/63 bridge over the Missouri River at Jefferson City

Quote: “That was the most fantastic feeling watching that (the Missouri River bridge) come together.”

Post-MoDOT plans: Fulfilling a dream of being a wife, mother and grandmother and living on a farm; taking care of family including husband, David



Hannaford

Also retiring: Buffalo Senior Maintenance Worker Johnny Stepp

“Talkin’ Transportation” Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield
10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays
radiospringfield.com

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D9

South Central

South Central Coalition Works to Keep Kids Safe This Spring

As spring arrives and the weather turns warm, teens begin thinking of prom and graduation. The South Central Coalition for Roadway Safety has been working hard this season reminding area youth to celebrate safely.

The season began with a check presentation to Alton High School for increasing their seatbelt usage by 21 percent during the 2010 Battle of the Belt competition, and a check presentation to Newburg High School for the second year in a row for the highest percentage of seatbelt use at 96 percent.



Senior Right of Way Specialist, Tamara Gregory presents Newburg High School with their winnings

On March 26, Thayer High School hosted the Save a Life Tour to promote drunk driving awareness. Students watched a video and listened to a speaker discuss how driving while intoxicated impacted his life. After the assembly, students were given the opportunity to drive a simulator that reacts as if the driver is getting increasingly intoxicated. According

to Instructor Charla Shrable, the event was a success. “These students got a good understanding of how easy it can be to make the wrong decision and how your reaction time slows after just one drink. We sincerely hope that we will have the opportunity to bring the tour back to the school periodically in order to reach as many of our students as possible,” said Shrable.

In early April, students in Eminence witnessed a rollover demonstration, showing the benefits of wearing your seat belt in a rollover accident. South

Central Regional Coordinator Kelly Martin says these rollover demonstrations are critical. “With only 61 percent of Missouri’s teens buckling up, the visual can be especially effective for kids in this age group. They can see how quickly an unbelted body is ejected from a vehicle in a rollover crash,” said Martin.

Willows Springs High School kept their focus on the prevention of distracted driving this season. Students recently attended an all-school assembly featuring a video docudrama, a presentation from Lt. Hinton with Troop G and a

presentation from Regional Coalition Coordinator Kelly Martin on the dangers of distracted driving. Lt. Hinton told the students a powerful, true story of a 3-year-old boy who sustained significant injuries when the vehicle he was riding in was struck by a distracted driver.



A Thayer High School student drives an intoxicated-driving simulator.

Students of East Carter County attended a Town Hall Meeting on underage drinking co-sponsored by the South Central Coalition for Roadway Safety and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in April. “We focused on students in grades 6-8 and their parents,” said East Carter County School Event Coordinator Ladeana Seib. In this unique meeting, guest speakers included Dr. D.L. Davis who gave interesting information on the effects of alcohol on growing children. Trooper Amy Johnson discussed the legal consequences of drinking and driving. Additional demonstrations were given by the Missouri State Highway Patrol’s Troop E and the Willow Springs Police Department.

Another unusual safety promotion in D9 was Houston High Schools “Battle of the Buckle.” In this event, students were challenged to come up with a theme for parked vehicles and spent the evening buckled into them to promote

seatbelt use. The challenge resulted in several wonderful themes, including hunting, cartoon characters and sporting events. Each hour the students remained buckled in their vehicles brought new challenging activities and requirements for the participants in this competition. Teams were eliminated hourly, while those still in the competition fought off sleep deprivation to stay buckled in. Prizes were offered for the top contenders. According to Houston High School Student Coordinator, Nicole Hooper, the event was a huge success. “We had several teams compete and everyone had a great time, all the while learning about seatbelt safety,” said Hooper.

In addition to the numerous events promoting roadway safety this spring, the South Central Coalition has provided community outreach grants to 13 schools to educate students during lock-in events at prom and graduation.



A faculty member tries to walk a straight line while wearing fatal vision goggles.

“Small” Projects Making a Big Difference to Residents

District 9 maintenance crews recently added over 9 miles of new, 2-foot shoulders to Route 17 in Howell County. This is one of the larger shoulder construction projects that maintenance crews in D9 have completed. Residents in the area have let us know they are appreciated.



Truck drivers visiting the Road Ranger Truck Stop at the intersection of Route 28 and Interstate 44 had been complaining about the sharp turns needed at this intersection.

Residents in the area had expressed concern over the development of deep ruts and grooves.

Luckily, crews recently

widened the shoulder and patched the surface. We have received compliments from drivers and residents alike.



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D10

Southeast

Culvert Flusher Wins Statewide Tool and Equipment Challenge

The District 10 culvert flusher recently received first place at the statewide Tool and Equipment Challenge for drainage equipment.

“We are very proud of the ingenuity and creativity of our Southeast District crews,” said Area Engineer Stan Johnson. “There were a lot of great entries at this year’s competition, and it is an

honor for us to be recognized.” At the competition, judges examined each tool and piece of equipment in four different areas: cost vs. benefit, convenience and ease of use, versatility and adaptability, and implementation. “By using the culvert flusher, we save time, manpower and money,” said Joey Cummins, Portageville Intermediate Maintenance Worker.

He explained prior to the invention, the crew had to perform many more culvert replacements. Now, these clogged culverts can be cleaned instead of performing an entire replacement.

The basic design of the culvert flusher includes a wand with a nozzle attached to a tank of water by a hose. The flusher is self-propelled allowing it to be easily



The culvert flusher’s nozzle includes removable, interchangeable jets, allowing the flusher to blast through various kinds of debris. By adding the shut-off valve, the water pressure to the culvert flusher can be quickly reduced.

maneuvered through a culvert. Also, by installing removable jets the culvert flusher can be adapted in a variety of ways to blast through many different types of material.

“To increase the safety of the culvert flusher, we added a shut-off valve on the hose attached to the water supply,” said Cummins. “This addition allows the water pressure to be quickly reduced if needed.”

As winners of the challenge, the district will receive an additional \$10,000 for the maintenance budget.

Additionally, the culvert flusher will be implemented across the state.

“The ultimate goal of the Tool and Equipment Challenge is to find creative solutions to help us perform our jobs better, faster, cheaper and safer,” said Maintenance Superintendent Keith Gentry.

He added that other districts have already expressed interest in implementing this new innovation.

“We are going to order several nozzles for districts to begin using,” said Gentry.



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn presents members of the culvert flusher team, Joey Cummins and Kimberly Arnold, with a \$10,000 check.

D10 Recognized for Paving Excellence

This March, the Southeast District received two awards for paving excellence.

One of the awards was received from the American Concrete Paving Association for the Route 61 rehabilitation project completed in Ste. Genevieve County. The project included a concrete overlay from Crystal City to Route OO.

The project was completed to improve access to the Holcim plant.

“Traffic control for this project was completed in a different way,” said Senior Highway Designer Dave Peyton. “The concrete overlay was completed without closing the entire route.”

The National Asphalt Paving Association also awarded D10 for quality in construction on the Route 51 overlay project from Route 72 to Perryville. This is one of District 10’s projects funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.



District Engineer Mark Shelton (right) presents Project Manager Tim Richmond (left) with an award from the National Asphalt Paving Association for quality in construction.



As part of the Route 61 project in Ste. Genevieve County, the Route TT interchange was improved. This project was completed to improve access to the Holcim plant.

ShareLeave Makes a Difference

Have you donated time to ShareLeave and wondered who used it and how it helped? Debbie Foster, D10 Senior Highway Design Technician, can tell you the difference it has made in the life of her family.

In March 1989, Debbie’s husband, Jack, suffered a massive heart attack, which disabled him at 39 years old.

Following his heart attack, Debbie worked to finish college, raise her children and take care of Jack. In 1991, she began working at MoDOT, and that same year Jack was placed on the heart transplant list.

“Jack is a survivor,” Debbie said. “He is one of the few people who have suffered a heart attack of this strength and survived this long”

“MoDOT gave me the stability to raise my kids and to give Jack the health care he so badly needed,” she said.

Debbie began working a 4-10 schedule, which allowed her more time to schedule and keep doctor appointments for Jack.

After growing progressively weaker, the need for a heart transplant for Jack became urgent in November 2009.

Not knowing what the outcome might be, Debbie chose to spend as much time as she could with him, for support and to learn about his condition and how to care for him.

The ShareLeave program allowed her to remain by Jack’s side as his condi-

tion worsened to the point where even breathing became difficult. Time was running out for a human donor transplant.

A compatible human donor was not available when time became critical, so Jack is currently using a Left Ventricle Assistance Device. This is a partial artificial heart that acts as the left side of his heart. The device is a temporary solution, and in six to nine months, when Jack regains his strength, he will be placed on the heart transplant list.

Fearing how the family would cover the expenses while Debbie was out of work, she inquired about the ShareLeave program. She added that she kept her supervisor informed of the situation, and he proved to be very helpful.

“ShareLeave took a tremendous burden off my shoulders by taking the financial concern away,” she said. “I would like to thank every employee who donates their leave to help others. This affects real people,” said Debbie. “Secondly, I would like to thank the MoDOT management team for their willingness to work with me on this.”

While this is not a new process for Debbie, she understands her family’s immediate future and how powerful the ShareLeave program can be.

For more information on the ShareLeave program, please visit <http://www.dot.missouri.intranet/shareleave/default.htm>.

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Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



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New Sign Will Welcome Missouri Visitors

by Melissa Black

A new sign will soon welcome visitors to Missouri. The larger, blue signs will be installed on most interstates before Memorial Day weekend.

“Even during tough financial times, people still travel and we want to make Missouri as welcoming as we can,” says Don Hillis, director of System Management. “With just this simple sign change we can help promote Missouri tourism.”

MoDOT and the Missouri Division of Tourism worked together on the design that replaces our former sign of almost 20 years. It includes the updated Missouri tourism logo and will be two feet wider and taller.

“Many of the old signs needed to be replaced anyway, but we’ve done everything possible to minimize the cost while still improving the look of our state and taking the opportunity to enhance tourism,” Hillis says.

All signs will be installed using the former posts, and whenever possible MoDOT uses reclaimed aluminum to



Terry Baker

Senior Maintenance Worker Tony Nichols (left) and Sign Shop Worker Dennis Peterson display the new Missouri welcome sign featuring the Missouri Division of Tourism logo.

reduce overall signage costs. The new signs are made with colored reflective sheeting that lasts longer and keeps their appearance and night time retro-reflectivity longer than the former signs that were silk screen printed.

Altogether, there are 66 signs around the state that will be replaced: 14 on the interstates, 22 on U.S. routes and 29 on Missouri routes. After interstate installations are complete, the rest of the signs will be replaced over the next 12 months.

Plans are underway to provide area enhancements around the signs for beautification. Headquarters staff is developing guidance for these enhancements that most likely will include native plantings.

Cracking Down on Buckling Up

by Reeve White

Seat belt use in Missouri remained relatively unchanged in the last six years and consistently below the national average. Missouri continues to hover around 77 percent seat belt usage, well below the national average of 84 percent. Missouri’s teen seat belt use is even lower at 61 percent.

Missouri’s annual Click It or Ticket campaign will begin May 24. Click It or Ticket is a national campaign designed to increase seat belt use and reduce highway fatalities. The campaign couples high-visibility enforcement with public information and education and paid advertising.

Law enforcement officers will be

cracking down on motorists who aren’t wearing seat belts, and an advertising campaign will send a strong message about the benefits of wearing a seat belt and the consequences if you don’t.

This year’s campaign will also focus on child safety seat violations. When drivers aren’t buckled up, 28 percent of the children are not restrained either. When the driver was buckled up, only 2 percent of the children weren’t restrained.

Buckle up or pay up; the price could be your life. After all, it takes less time to buckle up than fly through the windshield. And road rash never looked good on anybody.

Watch for Hogs

by Reeve White

In 2009, Missouri saw a 21.9 percent decrease in motorcycle fatalities. In an effort to continue this decrease, the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety has joined with federal, state and local highway safety, law enforcement, and motorcycle organizations in proclaiming May 2010 as Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.

“As the weather improves, more and more motorcyclists are hitting the roads,” said Leanna Depue, MoDOT Director of Highway Safety. “Drivers of all vehicles need to be extra attentive and make sure you share the road and everyone Arrives Alive.”

In 2009, 85 people were killed in motorcycle crashes. Ten percent of Missouri’s 2009 fatalities involved a motorcycle, and 99 percent of the people who died in crashes involving a motorcycle in Missouri were the motorcyclist.

From May to August, paid advertising will remind motorists to “Share the Road” while reminding motorcyclists to do their part by wearing a helmet and protective clothing. Posters, brochures and billboards will feature Gary Pinkel, Mizzou football coach and motorcycle enthusiast.

For more information about motorcycle safety, visit www.saveMOLives.com.